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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 7, 2007

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ST. PETERSBURG SEX OFFENDER CONVICTED OF ATTEMPTED PRODUCTION OF CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

Tampa, Florida - A jury in U.S. District Court today found Samuel Darryl Matthews, 54, of St. Petersburg, Florida, guilty of attempted production of child pornography. The defendant faces a mandatory minimum penalty of 35 years' imprisonment up to life in prison. The sentencing hearing is scheduled for October 19, 2007.

Samuel Darryl Matthews was indicted on June 14, 2007. According to evidence presented at trial, Matthews repeatedly asked his former roommate for sexually explicit photographs of his God-daughter's younger sister. Once the roommate became convinced that Matthews' requests were not going to stop, he reported Matthews to law enforcement. Thereafter, the roommate introduced Matthews to an undercover Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office detective posing as a financially-strapped mother willing to allow Matthews to take sexually explicit photographs of her 11-year-old daughter. Subsequent conversations between the two were recorded and included Matthews repeatedly asking the undercover detective for nude photographs of the girl. Ultimately, Matthews drove to meet the undercover detective and her daughter at a local restaurant, where Matthews was arrested. A search performed after Matthews' arrest yielded, among other items, a Polaroid camera, three digital cameras, and a book about photographing children.

The case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Innocent Images Task Force and the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Rachelle DesVaux Bedke.
